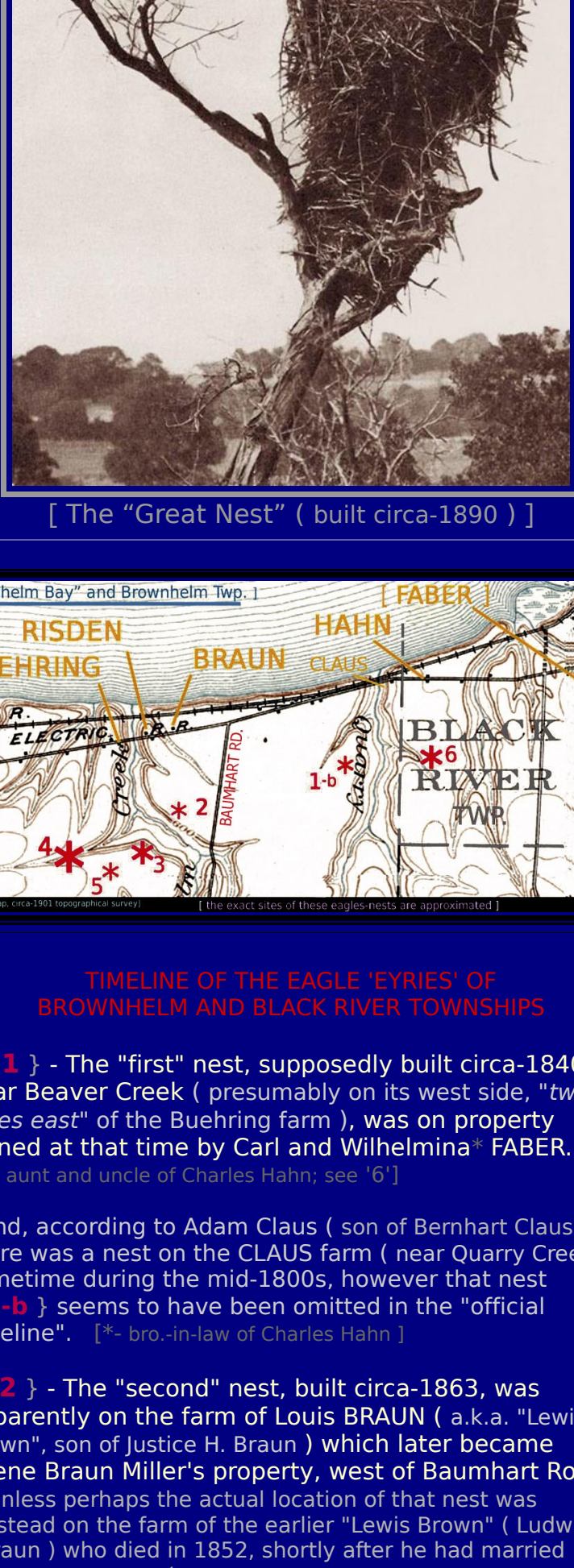


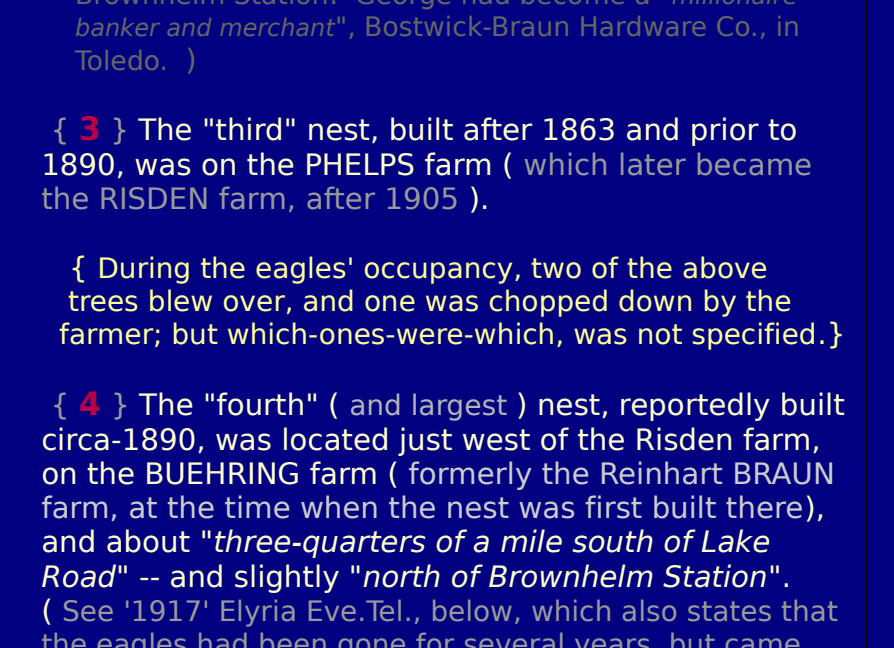
# VERMILION'S\* FAMOUS EAGLES: THE BIG BIRDS-OF-PREY OF BROWNHELM BAY

-20-  
L. MERRILL

[ \* - although not technically within 'Vermilion' at the time they were famous ]  
\*\*\*\*\*



[ The "Great Nest" ( built circa-1890 ) ]



## TIMELINE OF THE EAGLE 'EYRIES' OF BROWNHELM AND BLACK RIVER TOWNSHIPS

{ 1 } - The "first" nest, supposedly built circa-1840, near Beaver Creek ( presumably on its west side, "two miles east" of the Buehring farm ), was on property owned at that time by Carl and Wilhelmina\* FABER.  
[\* - aunt and uncle of Charles Hahn; see '6']

And, according to Adam Claus ( son of Bernhart Claus\* ), there was a nest on the CLAUS farm ( near Quarry Creek ) sometime during the mid-1800s, however that nest { 1-b } seems to have been omitted in the "official timeline". [\* - pro.-in-law of Charles Hahn ]

{ 2 } - The "second" nest, built circa-1863, was apparently on the farm of Louis BRAUN ( a.k.a. "Lewis Brown", son of Justice H. Braun ) which later became Allene Braun Miller's property, west of Baumhart Road. Unless perhaps the actual location of that nest was instead on the farm of the earlier "Lewis Brown" ( Ludwig Braun ) who died in 1852, shortly after he had married Catherine Braetz ( a sister of Wilhelmina Braetz Faber, above ). This earlier "Lewis Brown" property was mainly located on the east side of Baumhart Rd. -- although he also owned land adjacent to the village of Brownhelm Station. ( In 1912, his son George A. Braun sold that final remainder of his father's former property near Brownhelm Station. George had become a "millionaire banker and merchant", Bostwick-Braun Hardware Co., in Toledo. )

{ 3 } The "third" nest, built after 1863 and prior to 1890, was on the PHELPS farm ( which later became the RISDEN farm, after 1905 ).

{ During the eagles' occupancy, two of the above trees blew over, and one was chopped down by the farmer; but which-ones-were-which, was not specified. }

{ 4 } The "fourth" ( and largest ) nest, reportedly built circa-1890, was located just west of the Risden farm, on the BUEHRING farm ( formerly the Reinhart BRAUN farm, at the time when the nest was first built there ), and about "three-quarters of a mile south of Lake Road" -- and slightly "north of Brownhelm Station". ( See '1917' Elyria Eve.Tel., below, which also states that the eagles had been gone for several years, but came back in 1917; therefore disputing that this "Great Nest" had been used "continually" since 1890\* ). This is also where Prof. Herrick's first observation "treehouse" was built, in 1922, in a tall tree about 100 feet southeast of the eagles-nest tree. [\* - Herrick seems to have mainly relied upon the assertions of the Buehring family, for his own published timeline of all of those 'eyries'. ]

In Aug. 1923, ( while the nest was empty ), that tree became damaged and unstable during a wind-storm, so Prof. Herrick decided to have steel cables attached to it, in an ( unwise ) attempt to keep it from falling.

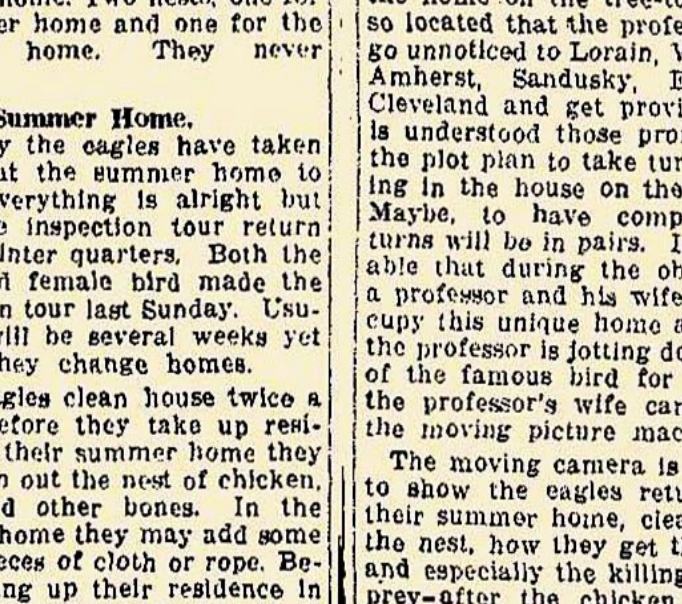
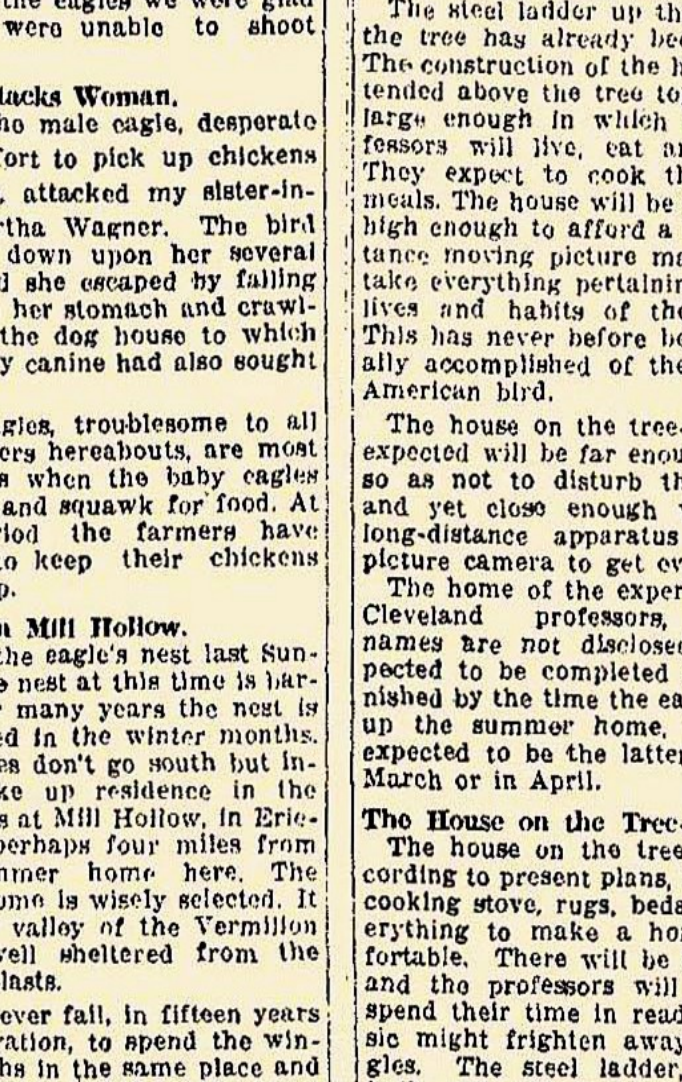
In Nov. 1924, after a poacher killed the male eagle, the female eagle briefly left this area to find a new mate, and they returned to the same 'Great' nest on the Buehring farm; but in March of 1925 that "fourth" nest ( and tree ) was completely destroyed ( with some unhatched eggs in it ), in another wind-storm.

Ten days later, the eagles began a new nest { 5 } in a nearby 300-year-old oak tree, about "400 feet southeast" of the 'Great' nest, and slightly closer to Brownhelm Station, and within easy viewing from the farm of Henry Wagner ( 1st-cousin of Charles Hahn ).

But this tree was apparently already too weakened by insect infestation, and in May 1926 the main limb supporting the nest, broke in a windstorm, and the nest collapsed with recently-hatched baby eaglets still in it. ( Prof. Herrick had just installed a new, steel, observation tower there, a few months prior - see photo. )

{ 6 } The eagles ostensibly didn't start rebuilding until the end of that year (1926), when they relocated about a mile east, "just over the eastern town(ship) line in Black River", on the farm of Charles HAHN\*\*, who leased a site to Western Reserve Univ. for the steel observation tower in 1927; that tower blew down in a wind-storm in 1929\* --- but that eagles' nest, which was still there in 1932. ( \* - Prof. Herrick had a slightly larger steel tower installed there, during his final observations in Spring, 1930. )

[\*\* - gr.-gr.-grandfather of the compiler of this e-booklet ]



## THE REGISTER, SANDUSKY, OHIO- SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1922

### EAGLES HABITS IN HUGE NEST NEAR VERMILION TO BE SHOWN ON SCREEN

#### College Professors to Establish Observa- tion Camp in Large Tree Nearby; About Famous Birds Which Have Long Lived There.

(Staff Correspondent)  
**BROWNHELM STATION,**  
O., Feb. 11.—Residents of the  
nation before the end of the  
present year will have shown  
to them the minutest habits  
of the American eagle, the  
bird that has made the Amer-  
ican dollar famous and which  
personifies the fighting spirit  
of the world's greatest nation.

Professors of Western Reserve  
University, Cleveland, who are in-  
terested in the study of birds and  
especially in the eagle which has  
proven the most difficult to study,  
have undertaken the task.

The huge eagle's nest is located  
near the summer camp of Feather-  
weight Champion Johnny Kil-  
bane, perhaps midway between  
Lorain and Vermilion along the  
shore of Lake Erie.

**Nest is Huge One.**  
The nest, estimated at twenty  
feet in diameter, is in a topmost  
crotch of a huge tree in a forest  
half a mile from the Cleveland-  
Sandusky concrete pike and with-  
in a stone's throw of the home  
of Henry Wagner, my father-in-  
law.

I have seen the eagles and their  
huge nest often. Several times  
after my father-in-law missed  
large numbers of chickens, we had  
to wait for the eagles, hunted  
cover when they attacked us, but  
never got a fatal shot at any of  
the birds. After our wrath, and  
realization that the law forbade  
shooting the eagles we were glad  
that we were unable to shoot  
them.

**Eagle Attacks Woman.**  
Once, the male eagle, desperate  
in an effort to pick up chickens  
or lambs, attacked my sister-in-  
law, Martha Wagner. The bird  
swooped down upon her several  
times and she escaped by falling  
flat upon her stomach and crawl-  
ing into the dog house to which  
the family canine had also sought  
shelter.

The eagles, troublesome to most  
farmers hereabouts, are all  
ravageous when the baby chicks  
are here and squawk for food. At  
this period the farmers have  
learned to keep their chickens  
locked up.

**Winter in Mill Hollow.**  
I saw the eagle's nest last Sun-  
day. The nest at this time is har-  
ren. For many years the nest is  
abandoned in the winter months.  
The eagles don't go south but in-  
stead take up residence in the  
pine trees at Mill Hollow, in Erie-  
co and perhaps four miles from  
their summer home here. The  
winter home is wisely selected. It  
is in the valley of the Vermilion  
River, well sheltered from the  
wintry blasts.

They never fall, in fifteen years  
of observation, to spend the win-  
ter months in the same place and  
the summer period in the same  
summer home. Two nests, one for  
the winter home and one for the  
summer home. They never  
change.

**Inspect Summer Home.**  
Already the eagles have taken  
a peep at the summer home to  
see if everything is alright but  
after the inspection tour return  
to the winter quarters. Both the  
male and female bird made the  
inspection tour last Sunday. Usual-  
ly it will be several weeks yet  
before they change homes.

The eagles clean house twice a  
year. Before they take up resi-  
dence in their summer home they  
will clean out the nest of chicken  
lamb and other bones. In the  
summer home they may add some  
twigs, pieces of cloth or rope. Be-  
fore taking up their residence in  
their winter home they clean it  
out also of the bones from the  
spoils of living of the previous  
winter. For the winter home they  
add plenty of leaves and usually  
kill several sheep or lambs to eat  
and then use the wool to make  
the winter home comfy.

**When Eagles Leave.**  
The eagles will shortly pair off.  
Just how many there are or where  
they all have their nests is never  
known. It is known that Pa and  
Ma Eagle occupy the same homes.  
When the eaglets are able to be  
pushed off the edge of the  
nest near here and the  
parents see that they are able to  
fly the eagles bid good-bye to  
their parents and they strike out  
in the world for themselves.  
Where they go no one knows.  
Observers here believe that they  
never come back to the old home  
for year after year they never  
see but the parent eagles. The  
parent eagles make sure that the  
eaglets are entirely able to fly.  
During the nesting period I have  
often seen the parent eagles push  
off the brink of the nest  
their brood of four, five or six  
eaglets, see them flutter away  
and maybe crash against a tree  
or a fence. I have seen both Pa  
and Ma Eagle make a valiant ef-  
fort to get an eaglet, who was in-  
competent, to fly back into the  
nest and wait a few days before  
pushing the off-spring out of the  
home.

**Going Into Movies.**  
The nesting season of the eagles  
will soon be here. Professors of  
Western Reserve University, co-  
operating with a film company,  
are preparing to get a complete  
life of the eagles.

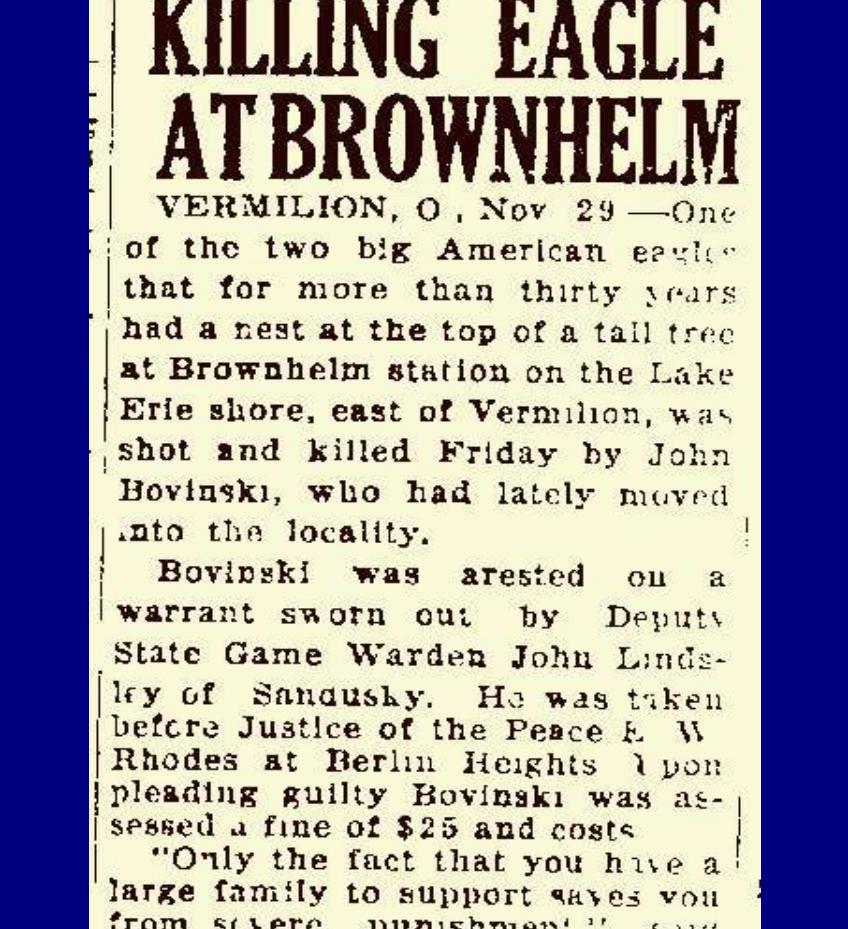
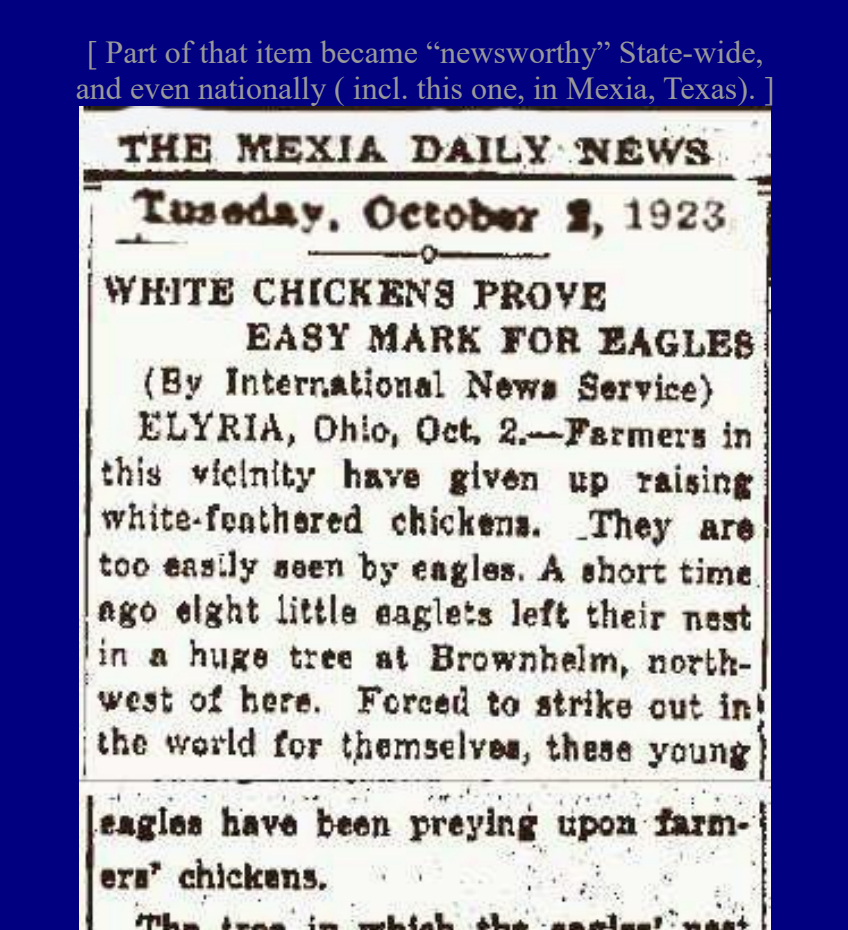
In a large elm tree, not quite  
as tall as the tree in which is lo-  
cated the summer home of the  
eagles, the professors expect to  
establish a camp. This tree, on  
top of which an observation home  
will be built, is perhaps seven or  
eight rods from the eagles' nest.  
The steel ladder up the side of  
the tree has already been built.  
The construction of the house, ex-  
tended above the tree top will be  
large enough in which the profes-  
sors will live, eat and sleep.  
They expect to cook their own  
meals. The house will be extended  
high enough to afford a long dis-  
tance moving picture machine to  
take everything pertaining to the  
lives and habits of the eagles.  
This has never before been actu-  
ally accomplished of the famous  
American bird.

The house on the tree-top it is  
expected will be far enough away  
so as not to disturb the eagles  
and yet close enough with the  
long-distance apparatus of the  
picture camera to get everything.  
The home of the experimenting  
Cleveland professors, whose  
names are not disclosed, is ex-  
pected to be completed and fur-  
nished by the time the eagles take  
up the summer home, which is  
expected to be the latter part of  
March or in April.

**The House on the Tree-Top.**  
The house on the tree-top, ac-  
cording to present plans, will have  
cooking stove, rugs, beds and ev-  
erything to make a home com-  
fortable. There will be no music  
and the professors will have to  
spend their time in reading. Mu-  
sic might frighten away the eu-  
gles. The steel ladder, already  
built, will afford easy access to  
the home on the tree-top and is  
so located that the professors can  
go unnoticed to Lorain, Vermilion,  
Amherst, Sandusky, Elyria or  
Cleveland and get provisions. It  
is understood those professors in  
the plot plan to take turns at liv-  
ing in the house on the tree-top.  
Maybe, the professors expect to  
take turns with a film company, the  
turns will be in pairs. It is prob-  
able that during the observation  
a professor and his wife may oc-  
cupy this unique home and while  
the professor is jotting down notes  
of the famous bird for posterity  
the professor's wife can operate  
the moving picture machine.

The moving camera is expected  
to show the eagles returning to  
their summer home, cleaning out  
the nest, how they get their food  
and especially the killing of their  
prey, after the killing, usually,  
is brought to the nest. The camera  
will show, it is expected, the egg-  
laying period of the eagle, picture  
of Ma Eagle during the brooding  
period, the eaglets, how they are  
fed, the protection given by Ma  
Eagle which never leaves them,  
then the turning out of the home  
of the eagles and finally how Ma  
and Pa Eagle love and coo during  
the remainder of the season alone.

[ The above '1922' news item was written by\* local-historian / humorist  
Otto Mischke -- sometimes perhaps more 'humorist' than "historian".  
( \* - as per the similar version published in the Elyria newspaper ) ]



## CHRONICLE-TELEGRAM FRIDAY, AUGUST 10, 1923

### TEN EAGLES NEST AT BROWNHELM HAS HAD ITS BEST DAY

The ten Eagles nest at Brown-  
helm, a quarter of a mile south  
of the Lake Shore road, just this  
side of Sunnyside, has probable-  
ly fostered its last batch of Eagles.

The huge tree, near the top  
of which the ten nest has been  
built is ready to be blown over.  
So serious is the section in fears  
of losing this novelty that profes-  
sors of Western Reserve Univer-  
sity who have erected an obser-  
vatory platform on an adjoining  
tree, have braced the tipping  
tree with two guy wires.

The placing of the guy wires,  
the drooping nest and the obser-  
vatory platform is thought to  
have driven the Eagles away.  
Already they have abandoned  
their nest for this year but this  
is often done after the eaglets  
have learned to fly and strike  
out in the world for themselves.

The Eagles have not left this  
section but are believed to have  
shifted homes to Mill Hollow.  
Only the other day a parent  
Eagle flew near its abandoned  
domicile.

The eagles were more ravag-  
ing this year than ever. Many  
residents nearby report the loss  
of many chickens, especially the  
White Wyandotte which the  
eagles easily discerns from a tree  
in the woods and speedily  
swoops down upon it. Residents  
in the Brownhelm district are  
giving up the raising of White  
Wyandotte chickens and raising  
chickens which are not so easi-  
ly exposed to the prey of the  
eagle.

[ Part of that item became "newsworthy" State-wide,  
and even nationally ( incl. this one, in Mexia, Texas ). ]

## THE MEXIA DAILY NEWS Tuesday, October 2, 1923

### WHITE CHICKENS PROVE EASY MARK FOR EAGLES

(By International News Service)  
**ELYRIA, Ohio, Oct. 2.**—Farmers in  
this vicinity have given up raising  
white-feathered chickens. They are  
too easily seen by eagles. A short time  
ago eight little eagles left their nest  
in a huge tree at Brownhelm, north-  
west of here. Forced to strike out in  
the world for themselves, these young

eagles have been preying upon farm-  
ers' chickens.

The tree in which the eagles' nest  
rests started to topple, due to stiff  
lake winds and to the weight of the  
big nest. Professors from Western  
Reserve University, who built an ob-  
servatory adjoining the huge nest,  
found it necessary to string two cables  
to the tree in order to hold it up.

## Chronicle-Telegram 29 Nov 1924

### IS FINED AFTER KILLING EAGLE AT BROWNHELM

**VERMILION, O., Nov. 29**—One  
of the two big American eagles  
that for more than thirty years  
had a nest at the top of a tall tree  
at Brownhelm station on the Lake  
Erie shore, east of Vermilion, was  
shot and killed Friday by John  
Bovinski, who had lately moved  
into the locality.

Bovinski was arrested on a  
warrant sworn out by Deputy  
State Game Warden John Land-  
sley of Sandusky. He was taken  
before Justice of the Peace E. W.  
Rhodes at Berlin Heights upon  
pleading guilty Bovinski was as-  
sessed a fine of \$25 and costs.

"Only the fact that you have a  
large family to support saves you  
from severe punishment," said  
Justice Rhodes in passing sen-  
tence.

For more than a quarter of a  
century, zoologists from many  
states visited Brownhelm annu-  
ally to observe the eagles.

## CHRONICLE-TELEGRAM WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 1925

### EAGLE'S NEST WRECKED IN STORM

**Ten Nest at Brownhelm  
Station Is No More —  
Observation Station Is  
Useless**

**BROWNHELM, March 11.**—A  
lonely eagle today sits on a limb  
of a tree, viewing sorrowfully  
the wreck of the ten nest that has  
stood the stress of weather for 25  
years.

The nest was ruined when the  
old shell-bark hickory tree in  
which it rested was blown over  
in the wind last night.

Thanksgiving day the bird lost  
its mate.

Today it is without mate or  
home, and sits on the limb look-  
ing drearily out over the wreck.

Western Reserve had built an  
observation station in a nearby  
tree.



# VERMILION EAGLE NEST RUINED BY TUESDAY'S GALE

## Second Tragedy in Four Months May Frighten Birds Away.

A broken mass of limbs, feathers, grass, and the bones of animals whose flesh had fed more than fifty generations of eaglets, is all that remains of the one-ton American eagle nest near Vermilion, which was destroyed in Tuesday night's gale.

With the nest, two large eggs were destroyed, in which two partly formed birds were disclosed.

This accident is the second tragedy to the eagles during the past four months, and it is feared that the birds may be permanently driven away.

Last fall, the male eagle was shot by a hunter, but the female bird, true to her species, flew away, mated and after a few weeks, returned with her new partner. Now the two birds circle continually above the remains of their home, screaming at those who approach the nest.

Prof. F. H. Herrick, of the biology department, Western Reserve university, who has studied these eagles for the last decade, is of the opinion that the eagles may build a new nest on or near the site of the old one, although he admits that such accidents as this have been known to frighten eagles away from a locality.

The nest, which was eight feet wide and 12 feet deep, may be preserved for the Cleveland Museum of Natural history.

### CHRONICLE-TELEGRAM

FRIDAY, JULY 31, 1925

## BROWNHELM EAGLES UP FOR CAPTURE; FARMERS COMPLAIN

BROWNHELM, O., July, 31.—(Staff Special.)—The national government through the State Fish and Game Division has instructed Game Warden N. W. Croker, 515 McEwen street, Sandusky, to capture the bald-headed eagles here following numerous complaints from farmers in the vicinity of the new quarter-of-a-ton nest.

Croker's duty, it was said, is to get direct proof of the depredations and secondly to capture the birds. He is in a sort of quandary as just how to accomplish the task.

The eagles have not been around the summer nest lately but have been loitering about the Vermilion River at Mill Hollow, southeast of Vermilion, and directly west of Amherst.

While it is generally believed that the eagles had their customary offerings this year despite the fact the old one-ton nest was blown down in the spring and two eggs smashed, no one has seen the eaglets and Mr. Bouring, owner of the farm, can't get his annual \$25 from the government until he can show proof direct or indirectly to the federal representative who has been making annual visits for a score of years.

### Kill 5 Pound Turkeys

Farmers are loud and vociferous in complaining against the ravaging eagles. The 38 five pound turkeys on the John Hennings farm have practically all been devoured by the eagles. Another farmer saw the eagles carry away two of his lambs, another farmer said 51 of his chickens have provided food for the eagles this year and Henry Wagner, whose farm is closest to the eagles' nest, estimates its annual contribution to the eagle for many years as around \$100 a year with his loss being anywhere from 30 to 100 chickens a year.

All some of the farmers want to put a stop to what has brought sight-seers not only from all over Ohio but from adjoining states to the nest, is a permit to provide a specimen for some museum. The farmers declare they have the guns and that they'll buy their own shells.

### NORWALK REFLECTOR-HERALD

NORWALK, OHIO, TUESDAY, AUGUST 4, 1925

## Eagles Accused of Poultry Snatching Are "Acquitted" Followed An Investigation

"Acquitted" are the two Eagles of Brownhelm, charged with destroying poultry.

John M. Lindley, state game protector, detailed by the authorities to investigate the case, reports that the domestic fowls destroyed by the Eagles are so few as to be negligible.

Acting on request of Prof. Francis H. Herrick of Western Reserve University and, as he puts it, on behalf of the lovers of wild life, Lindley, accompanied by John M. Miner, former internal revenue department officer, Monday made an investigation of alleged depredations of the eagles on farms in the vicinity of the eagles' nest and found, so he announces, that reports were exaggerated and largely without foundation.

"I will make a report in full to Chief Thompson and will recommend that the eagles and their nest be not disturbed," Game Protector Lindley said following his investigation.

### Gather Evidence

Lindley visited every farm in the vicinity of the eagles' nest and this is the evidence that he gathered:

William Jordan—Lost one chicken a year ago. Opposes any harm to the birds.

John Henning—Owner of 88-acre farm, saw the eagles pick up three of his turkeys which were back in the woods. Other turkeys were missed and supposed the eagles got the rest of them, but would not swear to it. He has not been bothered by the birds for a long time. Last year he shot at one of the eagles merely to frighten it away. He is most opposed to having any one molest the eagles but thinks he should have some recompense for the taking of his turkeys. It was on a report that Henning lost 31 five pound turkeys and that Chief Thompson ordered an investigation of the depredations of the birds.

Miss Martha Wagner—Reported that she didn't think any chickens were lost on the Wagner farm during the past year.

George Riden—Owner of 150-acre farm—Says: "The birds never did me any harm. I am in favor of prosecuting anyone who would molest the birds. There are a lot of foxes around here and I believe the eagles get a lot of credit for depredations by the foxes. I have a large pine tree in my yard and very frequently one of the eagles will sit in that tree for a long time. My chickens were never molested."

Mrs. Frank Buchring—On farm where eyrie is located: "We lost only one chicken in 12 years. I feel that I would want to prosecute anyone who would molest the eagles. We would feel bad to see them go. We are proud to have a national bird home on our farm."

Mrs. John Ruminaky—40 acre farm: "The eagles never did us any harm."

W. E. Love—One mile from the eagles nest: "I have never had any chickens or anything else taken from the farm by the eagles."

Robert Trantis—Reported having lost two chickens.

Adam Claus—"I was born in 1862. One of the first eagle nests was built on my father's farm. I have been in contact with the eagles. I have never known them to do us any damage. I own 100 acres of land and have always lived here and never more than a mile from the nest."

Phillip Bachman—Owner of 80-acre farm: Lived here all my life. I have never had any damage done by these birds. I live right on the flight of the eagles between Mill Hollow and the home nest."

Mrs. Kishman—"My husband lived here 50 years. The birds have never done us any harm. Anyone who harms the eagles ought to be prosecuted."

Frank Northin—Owner of 157-acre farm: Eagles have done no material damage that he knows of.

[ Could the added presence of that "former Internal Revenue Officer" perhaps have unduly influenced the statements of some of those residents? ]



[ STEEL TOWER RE-ERECTED NEAR NEST '5'. 1925-1926 ]  
( and re-erected near nest '6' in 1927 )

## Vermilion Eagles' Nest Destroyed

### Three Baby Birds Killed by Fall in Storm

The noted aerie of eagles near Vermilion was blown down and destroyed by contact with the ground during the wind-storm Tuesday night. It was a tragedy because three baby eagles, the largest weighing eight pounds, lost their lives.

News of the destruction of the aerie was transmitted to Cleveland, and Prof. F. H. Herrick of Western Reserve university hurried to the scene to study the contents of the nest and its contents. He has made an exhaustive study of the habits of these birds for many years, and expects to gain valuable information as a result of the accident.

While Prof. Herrick and Dr. F. M. Houghtaling, Erie-co health director, viewed the parts of the nest on the ground the parent eagles hovered over them, but did not attempt to molest them.

Dr. Herrick says he will await with interest the rebuilding of the aerie if the older birds decide to continue their home in the vicinity of the old one.

The first nest, that was 35 years old, was blown down about a year ago and was rebuilt. The Vermilion aerie is considered one of the most famous in the country. It has been "shot" by still and motion picture cameras many times.

The first nest weighed nearly two tons.

1927 contract for erecting observation tower on Hahn farm. (nest '6')

### MEMORANDUM OF LEASE

THIS MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT, made and entered into this \_\_\_\_\_ day of June, 1927, by and between Chas. Hahn

and Western Reserve University, a corporation, acting through Sidney S. Wilson, its Secretary and Treasurer, (hereinafter called the "University").

WITNESSETH - That,

in consideration of the mutual promises the parties hereto agree as follows:

### ARTICLE A.

The Lessor hereby agrees:

1. That he lease to and leases to the University for a period of three years from the date hereof the privilege of erecting and using a steel tower on his farm in Vermilion, Ohio, on which said steel tower to be erected within a suitable distance from a tree in which is now located a certain eagle's nest; this tower to be used for observation purposes of this nest.

2. That said University may have the exclusive right to use said tower or to take pictures therefrom, it being understood that the purpose of this agreement is to permit the University to carry on the scientific work of observing the life and habits of eagles.

3. That he will permit the University to remove the steel tower which it is proposed to erect, at the expiration of this agreement or within a reasonable time thereafter.

### ARTICLE B.

The University agrees:

1. That it will pay to the Lessor the sum of \$50.00 per year for each of the three years, beginning on the beginning of the lease and to be paid by the University to the Lessor at the expiration of the lease.

2. That it will not remove or damage trees in the erection of its tower nor in any way damage Lessor's farm by the exercise of its right of ingress or egress.

3. That it will remove the steel tower to be erected, at the expiration of this contract or within a reasonable time thereafter.

### ARTICLE C.

It is mutually understood and agreed that the provisions herein contained shall be the basis for the consideration of a renewal of this agreement, should the parties hereto decide to extend the operation of this agreement.

It is also mutually understood and agreed that in the event of the death or removal of the eagles from the farm of the Lessor, so that observation may not be possible, before the rent reserved or any installation thereof shall become due and payable, or if for any other reason it becomes impractical for the University to continue its observations, no further payment shall be made by the University under this lease other than for the current year during which the University may elect to discontinue its observations.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties hereto have hereto executed this agreement by their duly authorized representatives in the day and year first above written.

Chas. Hahn

WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY  
By Sidney S. Wilson  
Secretary-Treasurer

[ Images of 1927 contract ( and the receipts), courtesy of the Weston family ]

WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY  
10940 EUGLIO AVENUE  
CLEVELAND, OHIO

No 32749

Chas. Hahn  
Lake Rd., Vermilion, O. R.F.D.

THE ENCLOSED CHECK IS IN PAYMENT OF THE FOLLOWING INVOICES:

Rental for Privilege of steel tower from August 1 1926 to Feb. 1 1927

26.00

WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY  
10940 EUGLIO AVENUE  
CLEVELAND, OHIO

No 42898

to Chas. Hahn  
Lake Rd., Vermilion, O. R.F.D.

DATE AUG 15 1928

Rent for privilege of Eagle Observation Tower for six months from August 1 to Feb. 1 1930

25.00

## FILMING EAGLES IS NO EASY JOB

CLEVELAND, Oct. 15.—Dr. Francis H. Herrick, professor of biology at Western Reserve university, at a Western Reserve University, experienced in obtaining a moving picture record of the family life of two American eagles at Vermilion, this summer.

He is engaged in cutting the film to two-reel length and inserting subtitles. He expects to finish this work in a week or so.

For ten weeks, after spending months in careful preparation, he kept constant vigil in a tiny canvas tent pitched on a steel platform 40 feet from the eagles' aerie and 90 feet above the ground, watching the birds and filming their movements.

In this time he saw two eaglets hatched from the egg, saw one of them die of neglect and mistreatment, saw the surviving eaglet learn to fly and hunt prey for itself, and watched the parent eagles fight two others that threatened the safety of the aerie.

C. M. Shipman, Willoughby, naturalist, assisted Dr. Herrick, the two keeping watch in turn at the perches of the tent. The aerie is in an ash tree at a height of 87 feet. The tree stands on the edge of Black River tp.

The eagles showed no fear of the clicking camera and frequently came to perch on the steel framework of the observation tower. They showed no alarm when branches were removed from about their aerie to give the camera an unobstructed view.

In May two hostile eagles attacked the aerie, but were beaten off in several fierce encounters, Dr. Herrick said. Apparently the male eagle was mortally wounded in one of these fights, however, because he disappeared immediately after and never returned.

This left the entire care of the two eaglets to the female. She was unable to keep the endless watch over her young that had been possible before her mate was slain. While she was away searching for food to give her offspring, the older eaglet, a female, mistreated her weaker brother, clawing him and striking him with her beak.

He would lie unconscious for long periods after these attacks and finally died at the age of three weeks. His body was trampled into the straw floor of the aerie and left there.

Pictures of the very young eaglets were difficult to obtain, Dr. Herrick explained, as the parent bird always covered them with straw before leaving the nest to seek food.

The older eaglet, hatched about April 24, did not leave the aerie until July 15. In the latter weeks of this period she spent much time "flapping and jumping about, exercising her flight muscles."

In time she could manage short spiral flights above the aerie and finally achieved a sustained flight of one mile. After that she began to accompany her mother on long flights in search of prey. The two would seek fish, fowl and small mammals, seize them in their talons, beat them to a secluded spot and devour them.

On Sept. 7, when the young eagle was eighteen weeks old and had been out of the nest nearly two months, the mother bird, much to Dr. Herrick's surprise, came one day to the aerie with a dead fish for her offspring. The latter, although quite able to obtain food for herself, followed the old bird to the aerie and shared the meal.

Dr. Herrick's film will run about 1,600 feet when completely edited. It will prove, "I think," he said, "that nothing described in my reports was at all exaggerated. The fight and play exercises of the young eagle will be shown and the later activities of all the eagles, young and old."

Preliminary arrangements for Dr. Herrick's observations were begun in November last year and the tower was built in the winter.

## Famous Vermilion Eagles To Return to Private Life

VERMILION, May 13.—Vermillon's pair of American eagles, whose fame has spread to the four corners of the globe, will return to "private life" some time this week when Dr. Francis H. Herrick ends his eight years' study of them.

The 120-foot steel tower erected near their nest in a woods at stop 116 Lake-rd, west of Lorain, will be entirely removed.

Conclusion of Dr. Herrick's study of the great birds brings to an end the most intense scientific research of his kind ever made. It is the most complete record of the life of America's famous bird from the egg to the adult eagle and has been internationally hailed by biologists as the greatest contribution of its kind to ornithology in many years.

In addition to a detailed account of the eagles' habits, Dr. Herrick has an enormous catalog of photographs showing every stage in the life of the American eagle. Perhaps the most wonderful eagle movie ever made is the photographic action-compliments is a complete motion picture film taken from the steel tower aside the nest.

Dr. Herrick began the study of the birds in the spring of 1922. At that time the original aerie, said to have been the largest of its kind in existence was high in the crotch of a shell-bark hickory tree near stop 121, Lake-rd. Dr. Herrick erected a platform in the top of an elm

tree 75 feet away. He carried on his observations from this platform for two years.

On March 10, 1924, the great aerie crashed about a storm. The eagles immediately rebuilt in a nearby nest which they occupied one season. Dr. Herrick erected a steel tower near the nest. The following year a heavy wind raked the top of the nest away, precipitating the three eagles to the ground.

The family then moved a mile or more east and built its present nest in the woods at stop 116. This tower also was moved and studied continued.

During the period of Dr. Herrick's observations the birds have had a hectic career. The male was once shot by a hunter, the female later selecting another mate. Two years later the second male was killed by a farmer, who wounded it when it swooped down in his barnyard and then clubbed it to death.

At one time the state game department threatened to interfere with the famous pair. After farmers in the vicinity complained that the eagles were carrying away their poultry and young lambs, Dr. Herrick protested and fought his case with officials in Columbus, proving that 90 per cent of the birds' diet is fish, brought from the lake. Small field animals provide most of the balance. Investigation showed the birds rarely pillage barnyards.

Farmers who made their complaints admitted later they were unfounded.

"admitted later they were unfounded" was a false statement. Also, the eagles' prey which was brought to the nest (including proven, occasional "domestic fowl"), was mainly for easy consumption by the baby "young eagles"; therefore ostensibly not entirely indicative of all of the prey of adult eagles while away from the nest. ]

## Has Made Study of Eagles



Dr. Francis H. Herrick, professor emeritus of biology at Western Reserve university, stands close to aerie. Left, another eagle is bringing a fish from Lake Erie to her newly hatched young. The nestling of four weeks, lower right, is covered with gray down.

## AMERICAN EAGLE LITERALLY LEARNS TO FLY WITHIN EGG

### Student of Feathered Family Gives Facts on Independence of Birds

Cleveland, July 29.—(P)—The national emblem, the American eagle, is a fitting representation of the independence of the United States.

Dr. Francis H. Herrick, professor emeritus of biology at Western Reserve university, offers the latest contribution to the tradition of the eagle's independence.

The American eagle literally learns to fly in the egg, before it is hatched, and is not dependent upon an anxious mother to flit about, giving it first lessons.

Instinct in Germ Plasm  
The flying instinct, he says, is born in the germ plasm of the egg.

Dr. Herrick has spent 10 years in delving into the private life of the bird.

Near Vermilion, Ohio, where eagles have made their homes for 80 years, Professor Herrick erected tall towers close to their aerie, watched them for long hours during the nesting period, and took still and motion pictures of them; also copious notes.

Only two or three eagles are hatched in the nest at a time, Herrick observed, generally only two.

Fighters From First  
From the earliest age they are fighters, and a little downy nestling has been known to kill its companion.

Their home, the aerie, is about five feet across and eight or nine feet

high, made of limbs an inch to two inches in diameter, and weighing around two tons. The aerie last for many generations until a storm blows it from the top of a tall, sturdy tree.

The bird begins hopping from one side of the aerie to the other.

"When about nine weeks old it rises about eight to 10 feet in the air and circles around the nest many times a day."

During flight practice it takes lessons from its instinct in seizing its prey. The prey is a stick, which it pounces upon, holds it in its talons, like it would a fish, and soars. When finally it leaves the nest it is a master of flight; nature does not trust it until it is.

The parent birds take no part in the lessons, but during all this practice the bill-to-bill feeding is continued."

Can Stand Cold  
Dr. Herrick found the eagle can stand severe cold and never migrates unless there is a heavy snow. One eagle, finally barged by hunter, was found to have 18 shots in its body, the result of many unsuccessful attempts to kill it.

The eagle's realm is a matriarchy. It is a female bird loses her mate she goes in search of another. Dr. Herrick found. If a male loses his mate, he waits on the aerie for a female to arrive and claim him.

The bird is extremely rapid in its movements. In photographing it, Dr. Herrick had to use a camera with a shutter opening in one 450th of a second.



